CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CALIFORNIA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

VOL. 49

SEPTEMBER, 1938

NO. 3

California and Western Medicine

Owned and Published by the

CALIFORNIA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Four Fifty Sutter, Room 2004, San Francisco, Phone DOuglas 0062 Address editorial, business and advertising communications to Dt. George H. Kress as per address above.

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Advertisements.—The Journal is published on the seventh of the month. Advertising copy must be received not later than the fifteenth of the month preceding issue. Advertising rates will be sent on request.

BUSINESS MANAGER GEORGE H. KRESS

Advertising Representative for Northern California L. J. FLYNN, 544 Market Street, San Francisco (DOuglas 0577)

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Subscription prices, \$5 (\$6 for foreign countries); single copies,

50 cents.

Volumes begin with the first of January and the first of July. Subscriptions may commence at any time.

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EDITORIALS[†]

REFORMS IN MEDICAL CARE: NATIONAL HEALTH CONFERENCE AFTERMATHS

National Health Conference, Washington, D.C.—The proceedings of the "National Health Conference," which met in Washington on July 18-20 and concerning which comment was made on page 105 of last month's issue of California and Western Medicine, continue to receive much attention in the press. A public health program for which an expenditure of eight hundred million dollars was outlined is naturally a matter of importance.

"United States News" Prints Symposium: "Is Present Medical System Adequate?"*—An interesting series of opinions from physicians, social-service workers, labor organizations and other executives have appeared in the "Question of the Week" department of the United States News, for August 1, 8 and 15, the result of an effort by that journal to obtain authoritative views on the problems presented, when the following questions were put to a large number of delegates to the National Health Conference:

1. Is there need for reform in the system of medical care now available in this country?

2. If reform is needed, should it take the form of compulsory health insurance as a part of a Social Security system?

3. Or should any reform be based purely upon voluntary group insurance methods under control of the medical profession itself?

4. If voluntary group insurance is considered inadequate, would a tax-supported system of insurance providing care for major illness and hospitalization be favored?

The Nature of the Contributors' Answers.— In regard to Question 1, the answers were almost unanimous that deficiencies in the asking for, and giving of medical care did exist and, therefore, should receive coördinated attention.

The other questions, concerning compulsory health and voluntary group insurance systems, were answered in varying manner; social service workers, and executives of labor and similar organizations being largely in favor of compulsory insurance.

- † Editorials on subjects of scientific and clinical interest, contributed by members of the California Medical Association, are printed in the Editorial Comment column which follows.
- * For other items on this and related topics, see pages 234 and 243.